



Deciphering Portuguese Script

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The ability to read Portuguese handwritten records opens the door to a world of records for those with Hispanic ancestry. It also provides a wonderful opportunity to serve others by helping to index records in Portuguese. In this class you will learn about the origins of the Portuguese language; the composition of the Portuguese alphabet; how to identify letters, spelling variations, names, and commonly used abbreviations. These skills will help enable you to more readily recognize record types and extract key information.

PORTUGUESE ALPHABET


24 letters

- K & W do not exist

Interchangeable letters

- i – y
- l – J
- z – s

Examples of words with interchangeable letters

- Paleiro - Paleyro
-  Image source: https://script.byu.edu/Documents/portuguese_paleography.pdf
- Jesus – Jezuz or Jezus

Spelling Variations

- u & v
- h

ABBREVIATIONS

You will find many abbreviations in the records. Commonly used name abbreviations:

- Antonio – Ant^o
- Francisco – F^{co} or Fran^{co}
- João – J^o or I^o or J^{ão}
- Joana – J^{na}
- Maria – M^a
- Margarida – Margr^a

Commonly used abbreviations

- Dito – D^o
- Conselho – Conc^o
- Filho(a) Legítimo(a) – F^{o(a)} Legm^{o(a)}
- Freguesia – Freg^a
- Natural – N^{al}
- Viuvo(a) – V^{o(a)}

For more information on abbreviations, please click on the following link if you are viewing this document electronically [Name abbreviations](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Portuguese_Genealogical_Word_List) or visit the article in the FamilySearch Wiki: https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Portuguese_Genealogical_Word_List

RECORD TYPES

FORMATS

Paragraph format

- Date, place, and name of the official or priest
- Information about the informant (civil registration)
- Information about the type of event
- Names of other people you might find in records:
 - Parents (births/baptisms, marriages, deaths/burials)
 - Spouse (marriages, deaths/burials)
 - Grandparents (births/baptisms)
 - Witnesses
 - Godparents (baptisms)
 - Surviving heirs (deaths/burials)

For a list of keywords, please visit the Portuguese Genealogical Word List article in the FamilySearch Wiki: https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Portuguese_Genealogical_Word_List

NEED MORE HELP?

- For more information on the Spanish alphabet, name abbreviations, and key words visit the [Portuguese Genealogical Word List](https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Portuguese_Genealogical_Word_List) article in the FamilySearch Wiki: https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Portuguese_Genealogical_Word_List
- Online classes in the [Help Center](https://familysearch.org/ask/landing) of FamilySearch, <https://familysearch.org/ask/landing>
- [Basic Portuguese Paleography](https://script.byu.edu/Documents/portuguese_paleography.pdf). This is a downloadable reference manual on reading Portuguese handwriting. It includes exercises you can do to improve your ability to read documents. https://script.byu.edu/Documents/portuguese_paleography.pdf

QUIZ

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2.		_____	_____
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8.		_____	_____
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10.		_____	_____

Image Sources:

Image 1, 3, 4, & 10: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSLC-3Q5V-4?i=879&cat=570685>

Image 2 & 6: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:939V-QV99-PL?i=545&cc=1913410&cat=445477>

Image 5 & 8: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:939V-B1S4-D2?i=34&cc=2177273&cat=989423>

Image 7: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:9Q97-Y3S9-9DLC?i=82&cc=2177296&cat=208216>

Image 9: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-67ZQ-GZ5?i=24&cc=1582573&cat=563697>